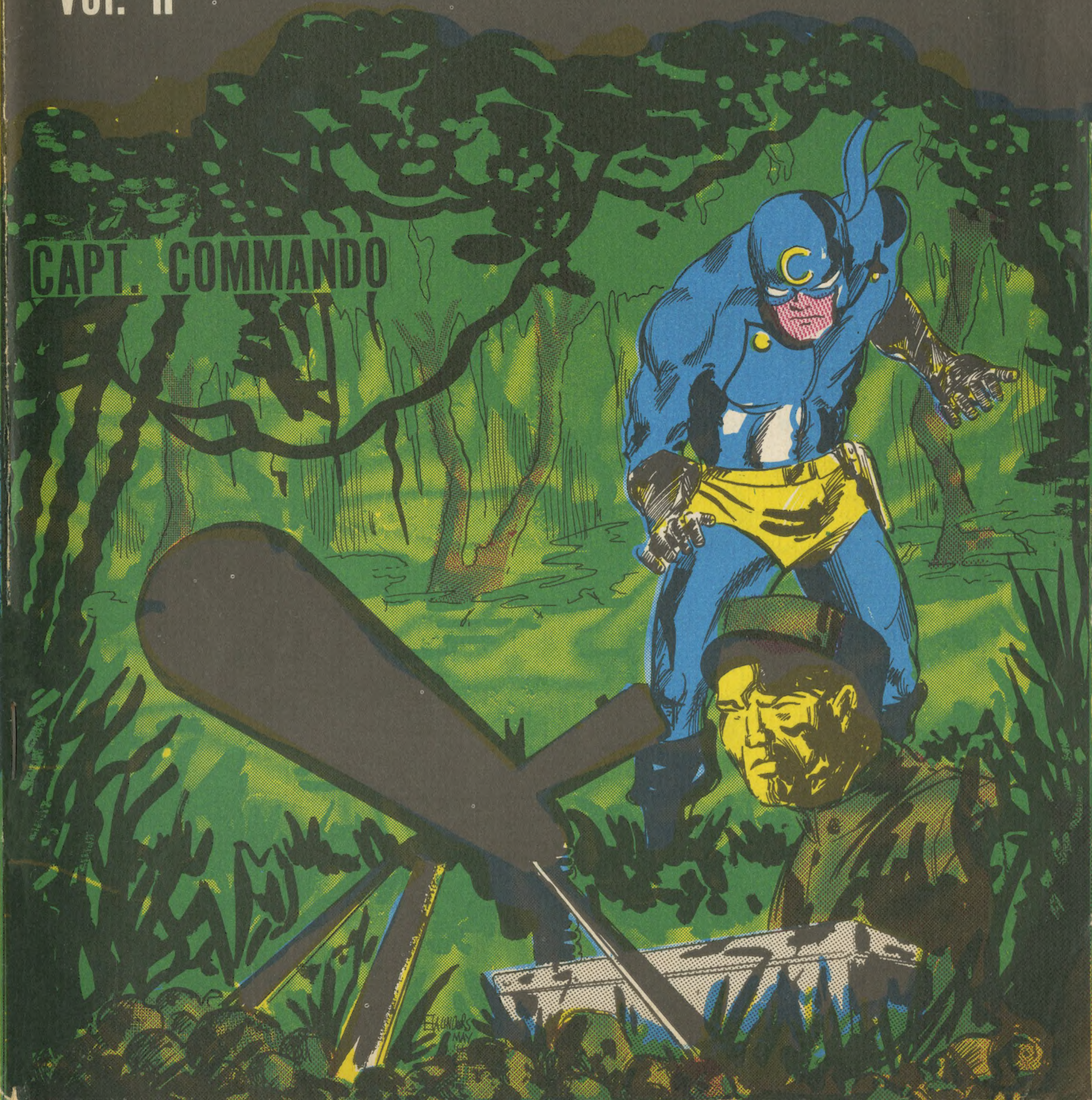
The Illustrated COMIC COLLECTOR'S Handbook

The S. F. C. A.

Vol. II



Heroes cataloged in this volume:

THE FIREMAN
THE CRASH KID
AIR MAN
THE BLUE STREAK
FLEXO
THE THIN MAN
MAGNO
TWILIGHT
THE FIREFLY
BOB PHANTOM
THE CHALLENGER
SUB-MARINER
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THE BLACKBIRD
RED RUBE
DOC STRANGE & MIKE
INFERNO
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WHIZZER
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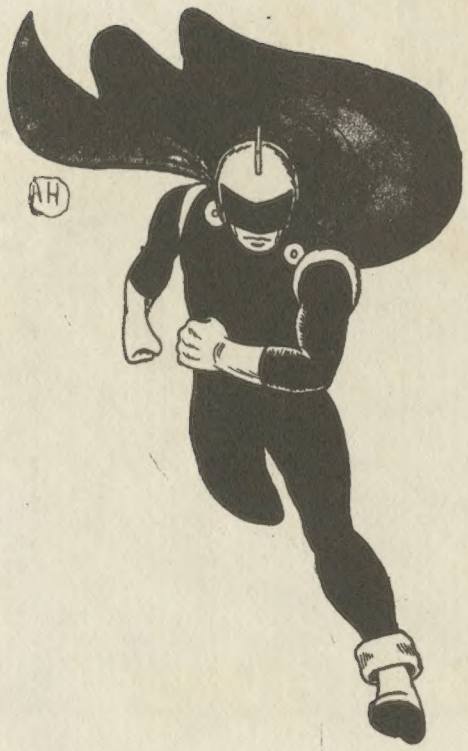
DYNAMITE THOR
THE FLAME & FLAME GIRL
BLACK JACK
THE HANGMAN
MR. JUSTICE
THE BLACK CRUSADER
MR. AMERICA & FATMAN
THE SHINING KNIGHT
SILVER STREAK & METEOR
NIGH-TRO
LONDON
CHIC CARTER (THE SWORD)
STARMAN
U.S. JONES
THE BLACK MARVEL

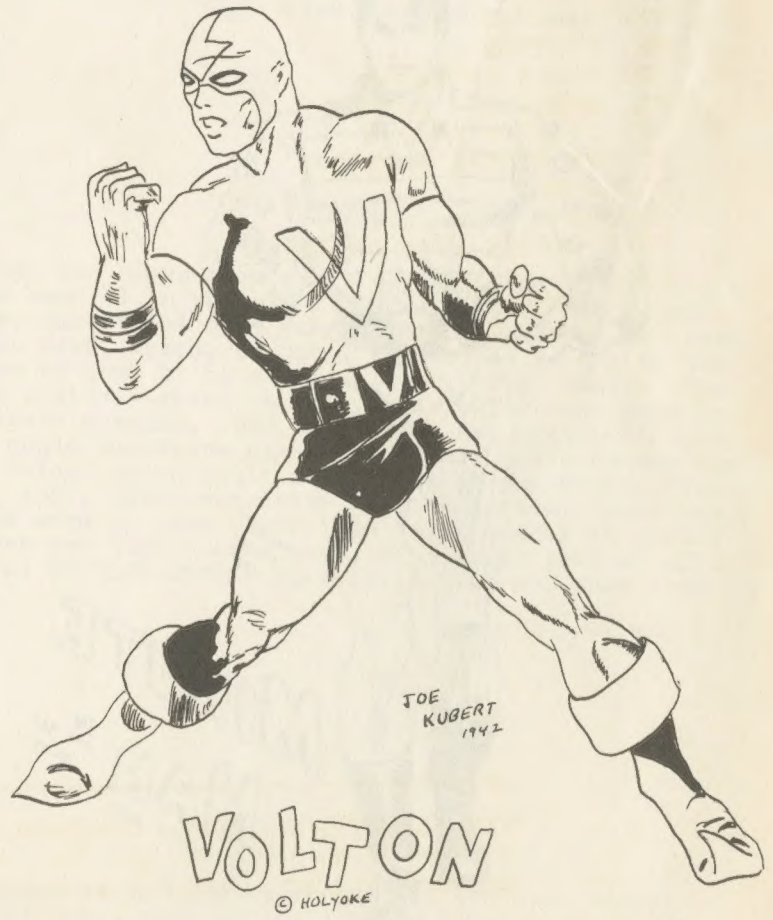


SHAMAN & FLAME
VOLTON
THE RAVEN
MINUTE MAN
THE BLUE BEETLE
THE RED BEE
MICRO FACE
HERCULES
GOLDEN LAD
SCARLET SENTRY
THE FIREBRAND
SUPERMAN
THE HUMAN METEOR
THE RED CROSS
BLUE BLAZE
THE MIGHTY MAN
THE SENTINEL
THE MASKED MARVEL
MAN OF WAR
THE ARROW
THE AMAZING MAN & TOMMY
FANTOM OF THE FAIR
THE MARKSMAN
VAPO-MAN
THE SHARK & POP
TNT TODD
THE FERRET
THE STARS & STRIPES
THE RAINBOW
SPEED CENTAUR
DR. SYNTHE
MINIMIDGET & RITTY
THE IRON SKULL
PAT PATRIOT
MANHUNTER
THE VIGILANTE
MAGNO & DAVY
THE WITNESS

THE ILLUSTRATED COMIC COLLECTORS HANDBOOK volume 2. Published by The SFCA, 9875 SW 212 St., Miami, Fla. 33157. Research and art by Raymond Miller. Layout and editing by G.B. Love.

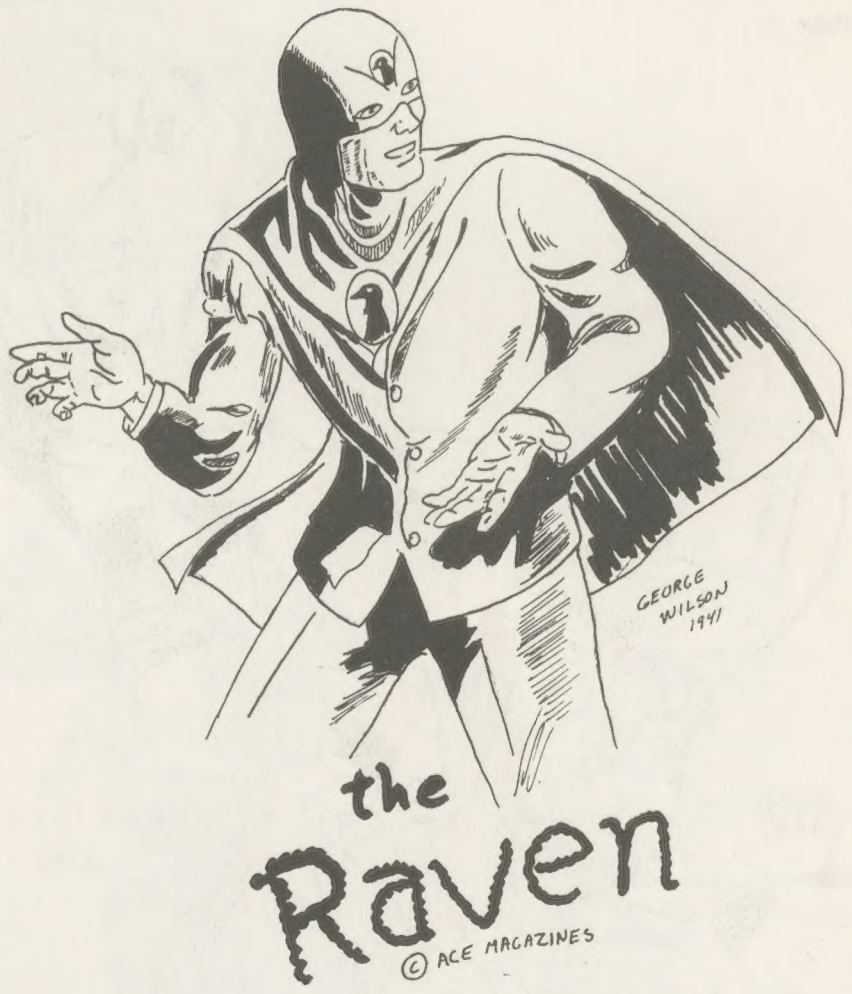
$1.00

Shaman & Flame's adventures were found in GOLDEN LAD COMICS in 1944-46. In reality they were Don Wickett, manager of radio station WWGL and his secretary Kandy Wilson. No one knew their alter egoes. They had no super powers, as such. The art was by Louis Ravelli. Their costumes were red with yellow capes, brown boots and gloves, and Shamam's mask was white.



This was the second costume hero to use this name. The first was in 1940 and can be seen elsewhere in this series. Volton was drawn by Joe Kubert and appeared in CATMAN COMICS 8-12. He had a number of powers--like being able to transport himself through a telephone to another phone miles away. Unlike todays Atom, Volton entered the phone full-sized and emerged the same way: a neat trick. He could also fly. At times he turned himself into pure electric power. Unfortunately, in this form he could be short circuted and this would cause his strength to fade. This was one of Kubert's earliest costume heroes as well as one of his earliest strips.

The one man army started his career in MASTER COMICS #11, Feb. 1941 and was in all issues through #49, April 1944. Costume wise he was Fawcett's answer to Timely's Capt. America and MLJ's Shield. Many of the early stories were drawn by Charles Sultan. Again, we find a costume hero with no super powers. About half of his adventures took place in Germany. His every day identity was Pvt. Jack Weston, U.S. Army. Minute Man also appeared in 3 issues of his own comic, as well as Fawcett's 15¢ comic AMERICA'S GREATEST 1-7. Originally he wore no mask but around MASTER 27 or 28, a blue mask was added.



The Raven began in SURE FIRE (LIGHTNING COMICS) #1, June 1940, as the no. 2 costume hero of this comic--with Flash (Lash) Lightning being the star. He appeared in all 13 issues of this comic and in his last appearence was even able to take away the regular Lash Lightning artist, Jim Mooney for his own artist. The Raven was really Detective Sgt. Danny Dartin. In his last case he was pitted against a villain known as the Buzzard. And, again this hero had no powers. His girl friend was Lola Lash, and like most females of this type of strip, she did not know that Danny and The Raven were the same person. The Raven was also in FOUR FAVORITES #1-4.

Did you miss the first volume of THE ILLUSTRATED COMIC COLLECTOR'S HANDBOOK? If so, copies are still available from THE SFCA at 60¢ per copy. Printed photo-stencil throughout it has capsule histories and illustrations of over 45 comic heroes, some of which include: THE BLACK ANGEL, DYNAMO, THE EAGLE & BUDDY, THE BLACK LION & CUB, and many more. If you missed the first volume be sure you get it because your handbook will not be complete without it.

GOLDEN LAD

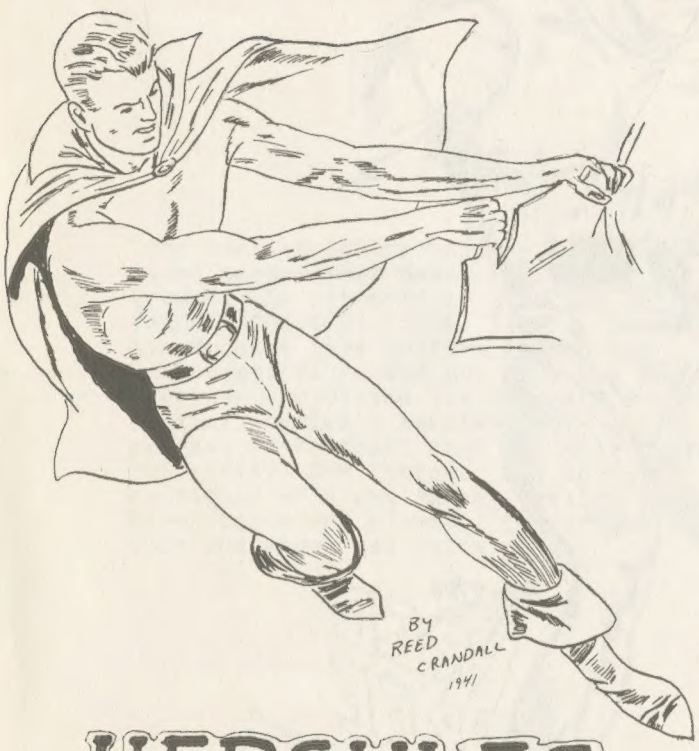
© SPARK PUBL CO

Golden Lad was just one of the many costume heroes from a number of small new publishers that popped up around 1944-45. GOLDEN LAD COMICS was published by Spark Publications, although the last issue -- #5, was published by Fact & Fiction Pub. He got his powers of strength and flight from the 'heart of gold' which the ancient Aztecs created. It lay hidden for centuries until Tommy Presten found it. He only had to hold the object in his hand and say "Heart of Gold" and he was instantly transformed into Golden Lad. The art was handled by Mort Meskin. His costume was green, with yellow cape and brown boots. His legs were bare.

MICRO FACE

©HILLMAN PERIODICALS INC 1942

Although the Micro-face strip was not done by Simon & Kirby, it was handled in their well known style. Tom Woods' brother was killed by a gang of crooks and Tom had invented a Micro Mask, which, up until that time, he had no use for. But now he used it to avenge his brother's death. The rest of his costume--green, purple, and yellow--was once an old masquerade costume. His Micro Mask had photo-electric eyes which could penetrate almost anything, a microphone amplified 'voice' which could sound like it was coming from anywhere, and a super-sensitive hearing device. Many early stories were by Alan Ulmer. In later issues it seemed that his mask was just that-a mask, with no devices at all. He appeared in CLUE COMICS #1-7,10,11. Am not sure about 12 or 13.



HERCULES

©QUALITY COMICS

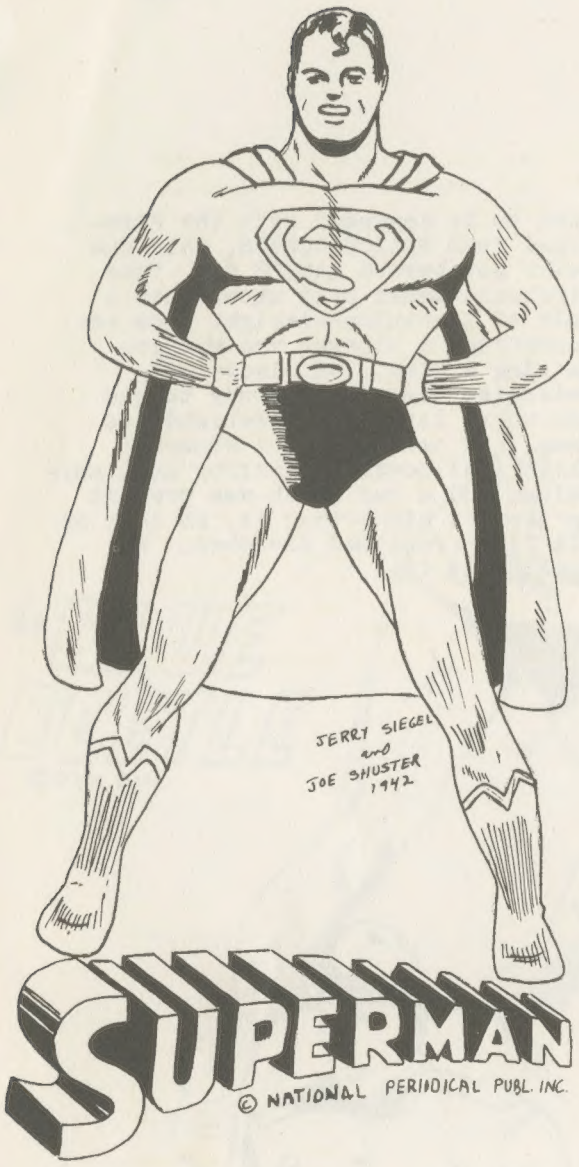
Hercules started in HIT COMICS #1 and was the most popular from about #11 (when Reed Crandall began doing some of the art) to about 18 or 19. Hercules possessed great strenth but could not fly. He could, however, be [illegible] rendered unconscience. The strip was written by Gregg Powers.

The Blue Beetle holds many records: Fox Publications' number one character; one of the all time greats; revived more times than any other costumed hero, and the only hero to span 25 years without much more than fair art. (And considering the art that has appeared on this strip from time to time, the word 'fair' might be a litter too generous.) Blue Beetle made his debut in MYSTERY MEN #1, Aug. 1939, with his friends Mike Mannigan and Joan Mason. In reality this hero was Dan Garrett, rookie policeman, who got his powers from taking Vitamin 2X, which gave him super energy. He was protected from harm by the almost invulnerable mail armor he wore. Blue Beetle also holds the record of being published by more publishers than any other costumed hero. By Fox in 1939-1941, by Holyoke from 1942-43, by Charlton twice--in the 50's and now in the 60's, and by IW reprints. The original Fox series saw BB in 31 issues of MYSTERY MEN, 7 issues of BIG THREE, and 10 or 12 issues of his own comic before Holyoke took over. For awhile in 1943 he had a young costumed partner named Spunky.

The Red Bee began his stint in the first issue of HIT COMICS. B.H. Apiary appeared on most of the strips but the art was never signed. The art was fairly good though and was somewhat like Lou Fine's style. No one ever suspected that The Red Bee was Asst. D.A. Rick Raleigh. He had a pet bee called Michael which help him on various occasions. The Red Bee appeared on the covers of HIT #1,5-7 and last appeared in issue #24 of that comic.

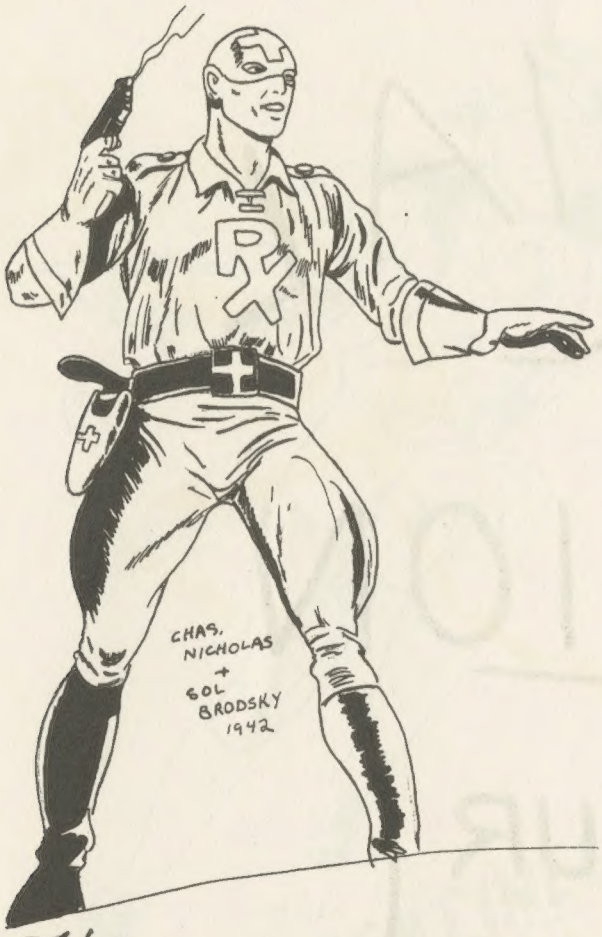
Not to be confused with the Firebrand from POLICE COMICS, this one never got beyond YANKEE #1. This Firebrand ~~xxxx~~ came about when a bolt of lightning-straight from the Sun-struck a lineman who was repairing a wire. An electrical scientist nemoved the body to his lab where later the Firebrand was born. He could control enough electrical power to destroy most anything, and a ray which was present to protect him---that is, as long as his fists remained clenched. He could also fly.

The Scarlet Sentry was one of those short lived heroes that never really got off the ground. He appeared in just one story--YANKEE COMICS #1 (Sept. 1941). Despite his Mountie type uniform (which was bullet-proof) he was not one, but an American who pitted his strength and wit against America's enemies. His alter ego was ex-football star (at Ohio State University) Don Lawson. His costume consisted of a red jacket, yellow pants, brown boots and gloves. The art on this one story was quite good.



Superman was, and is, the grand daddy of all super heroes. Created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, he made his debut in ACTION COMICS #1 June 1938, and has been its star ever since. Superman came from the Planet Krypton, as a baby, and was raised by the Kents, who named him Clark. Some of his most famous enemies are Luthor, Toyman, Prankster, and in early stories, Ultra. Only Batman and Robin know his secret. Superman has appeared in just about every medium--comic books, newspapers, radio, movies, and TV. Obviously, much more could be written, but I'm sure all of you are completely familar with the character.

The Human Meteor was the star of CHAMP (CHAMPION) COMICS from about #6 thru 24 or 25 (if there was a 25). The strip ran under 3 titles-up to #10 it was "Duke O'Dowd the Human Meteor," 11,12 "Duke O'Dowd", and "The Human Meteor" from 13 on. Our hero was a cab driver who possessed the priceless invention of an Ancient Tibetan Prince--a wonder belt which transformed him into The Human Meteor. He had great powers, including the ability to fly. Only a shoe shine boy named Toby knew his secret. CHAMP was a sister publication to GREEN HORNET and SPEED COMICS.



The RED CROSS
© HOLYOKE PUBL. CO

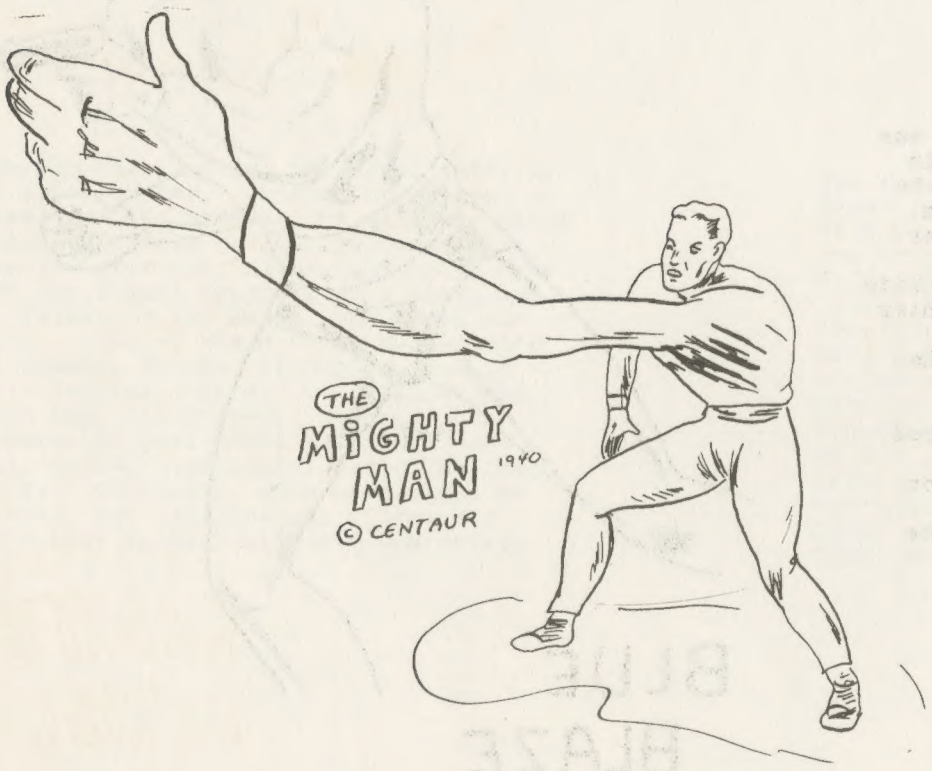
The Red Cross began his stint in CAPT. AERO COMICS #8 and was cover featured on this issue only. He made it all the way to the last one, #25. Created by Charles Nicholas and Sol Brodsky, one will find that these two only did two or 3 stories. Other artists on later strips were Jack Alderman and Maurice Whitman. The Red Cross came into existance when an American Doctor decided to put on a costume to fight the Japs in the Philippines. By his 2nd story he had moved to France and after that it was back and forth between the Germans and Japs. In real life he was young Dr. Peter Hall. The Red Cross had not super powers. His costume--a colorful one--consisted of white shirt (with red emblem)red pants, blue boots, gloves, and mask with the mask and gloves being trimmed in red.

Blue Blaze was Spencer Keen, who was struck down by a blue blaze in his fater's laboratory in 1852. But he wasn't really dead and arose from the grave with super powers. After each conquest he would return to the grave to sleep. A strange cosmic force would move him to a new center of crime where he would awake to fight again. His costume was blue with red belt and black boots. Art in MYSTIC #4 was signed by HArry Douglas. In all, he appeared in MYSTIC COMICS #1 (Mar. 1940) thru #4. He was cover featured on 1 and 3. Except for not wearing a mask, he looked quite a bit like The Phantom.

BLUE BLAZE
© TIMELY COMICS INC.

A SPECIAL SECTION

20 CENTAUR HEROES

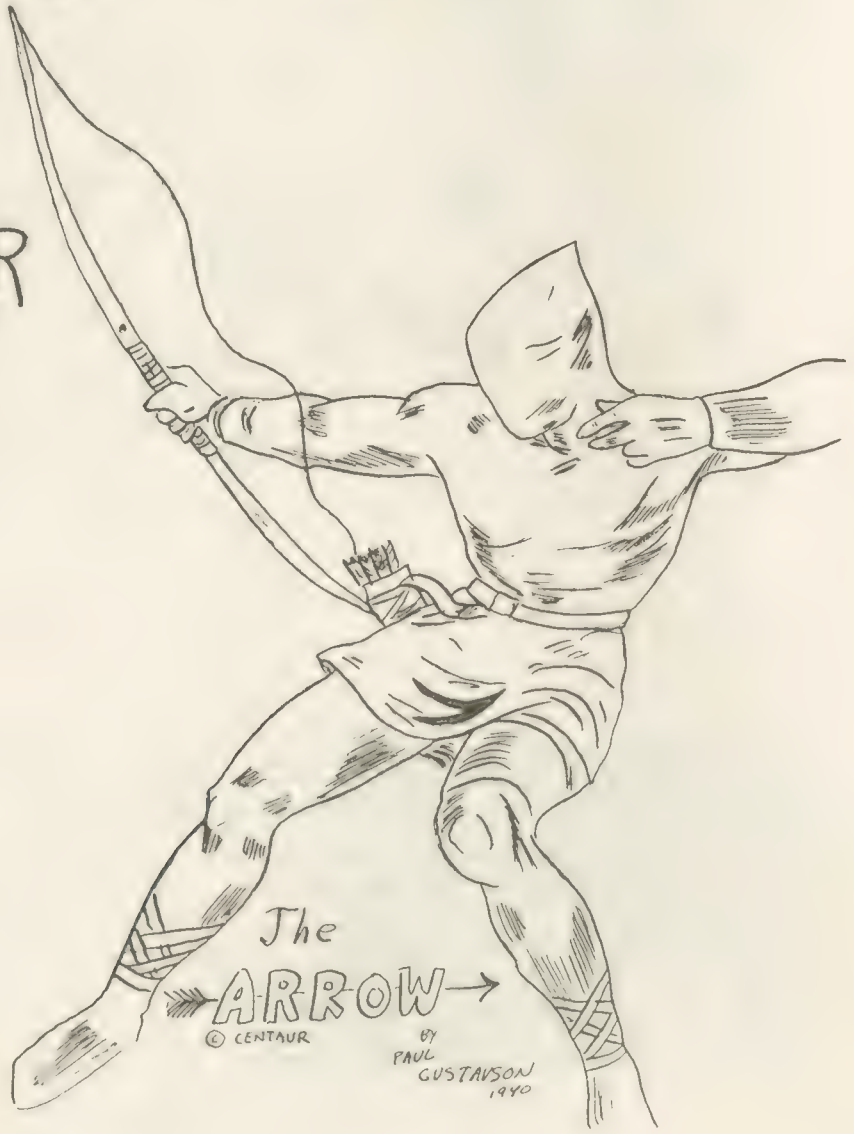


Mighty Man was featured in AMAZING MAN Comics. He was the forerunner of Giant Man because he could grow but also could shrink and even chan ge his facial features. But diffe- rent from Giant Man because he could will just a certain part of his body to grow. In early stories he was just a 12 foot giant that was found in a hidden valley in the Southwest. He had no costume or secret identity.

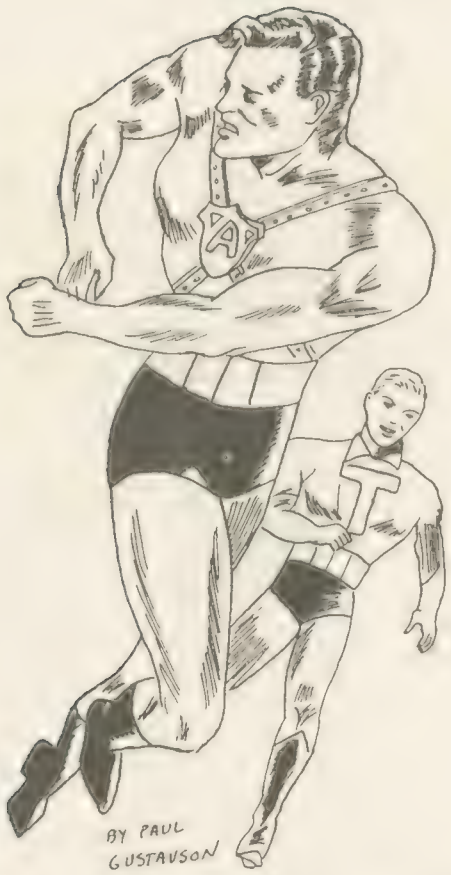
The Sentinel was created by the Spirit of America to combat the evil forces that were at work against the U.S.A. He was dressed in the red, white, and blue uniform of a Minute Man from American history. He always appeared in a flame of fire and then remained enveloped in it. His origin was in LIBERTY SCOUTS COMICS #2, June 1941, and he was also in MAN OF WAR COMICS.

The Masked Marvel, by Ben Thompson, found his home in KEEN DETECTIVE FUNNIES. Like most of Centaur's costumed heroes, he had no secret identity. With his 3 former G Men--Zr, Zy, and Zo--the Masked Marvel waged a never ending war against the criminal gangs of the U.S. He was a super sleuth but had no powers--he carried 2 guns in some stories, and he was also an expert pilot. His costume was all red with brown boots and yellow belt.. He also appeared in his own comic--the first issue being datedM Spt. 1940

The Arrow popped up in FUNNY PAGES during 1939-40. Another of Paul Gustavson's early costume heroes, one will find The Arrow in his own comic by 1940(#1 being dated Oct., 1940). Like the early Green Arrow (before all the gadget arrows) The Arrow was a regular Robin Hood with the bow and arrow. He had no secret identity and like another of Centaur's heroes--Fantoman--he just popped up out of nowhere. His costume was all red with green trim. By ARROW #3 Bob Lubbers had taken over some of the art and The Arrow had taken on a secret identity--Ralph Payne of U.S. Intelligence. By now, Centaur had become Comic Corporation of America.



This hero appeared in MAN OF WAR COMICS (formerly called LIBERTY SCOUTS COMICS) in late 1941. He was created by Mighty Mars- God of War. Man of War was able to appear and disappear on Earth in explosions. He also had the ability to fly and had the strength of Hercules. His costume was a red top with a yellow eagle emblem, blue trunks, boots, gloved and mask. He carried a flaming sword. MAN OF WAR #1 was dated Nov., 1941.



Centaur's most popular hero appeared in AMAZING MAN COMICS from 1939-1941. Originally titled Aman, the Amazing Man in early stories, one will find that this Bill Everett hero was no costume hero at all but an adventure type character. His strange powers came from a green ~~t~~ mist that would completely envelop and enable him to fly. His power was given to him by the Elders of Tibet, which was his home. Somewhere between #10 and 16 Amazing man added a costume which consisted~~m~~ of black trunks and boots, yellow belt and straps and a red "A" emblem. Now he was John Aman, also known as Amazing Man & "The Green Mist." Art in #16 was by A.L. Kirby and Sam Decker. By now he had great strength and could, by means of the mist, fly, walk through walls, and become invisible. In AMAZING MAN COMICS #23 the wise man of Tibet, Nika, gave Amazing Man far more power than he ever had before; greater strength and power to fly without the mist. But unaware to Nika and Amazing Man, a young boy named Tommy was watching and was caught~~t~~ in the lightnig which Nika used to give Aman more power and Tommy became the Amazing Kid. Amazing Man also appeared in STARS & STRIPES #4, Sept. 1941.

The Fantom of the Fair appeared in AMAZING MYSTERY FUNNIES during 1939-1940 and in at least issues of his own comic. By late 1940 he was just known as Fantoman. As you might assume, all his early adventures took place at the 1939-40 New York World's Fair, which is where the original title of the strip came frome. He was a super genius who watched, unseen, over the hugh fair grounds. He would always pop up unexpectedly whenever trouble arose--he had a underground hide out at the fair. So strange were his actions that even the police were after him. For the most part, the stories were by Paul Gustavson, who in some of the early stories just didn't look like Paul. His original costume was all blue-black with his face being completely covered, and a red cape. By the 1940 the mask~~m~~ was changed to cover only the top portion of his face and was red. Sahle & Kapitan did a Fantoman story in FANTOMAN #4, Dec. 1940, The illo shown here is from AMAZING MYSTERY FUNNIES Vol. 2 #7, July 1939.

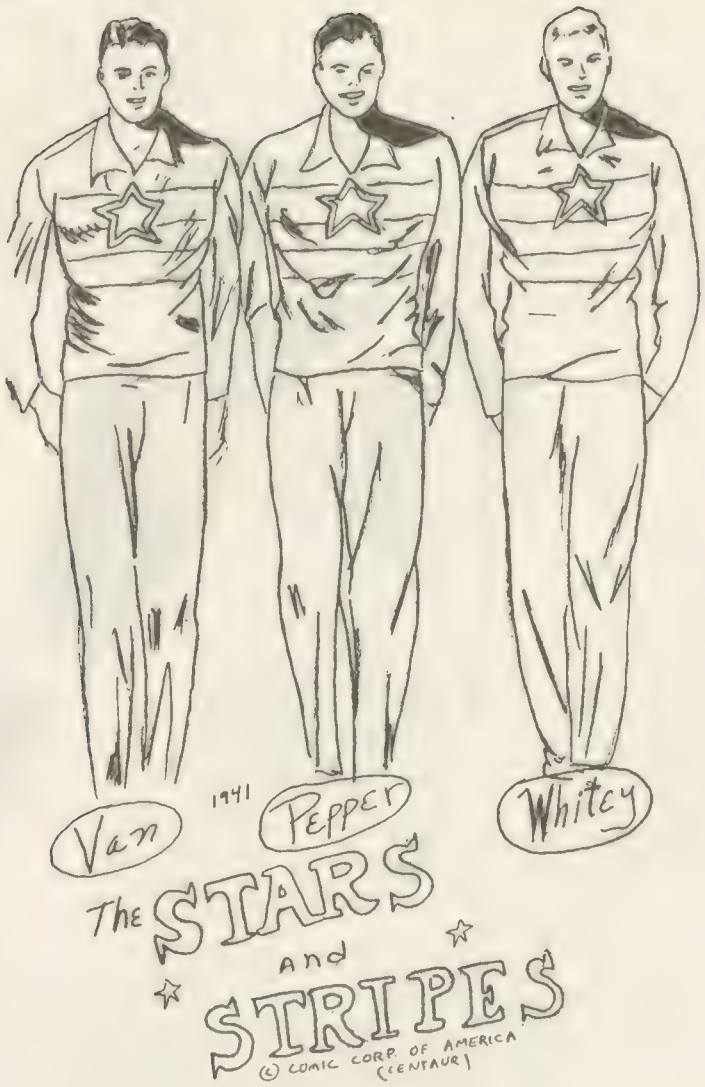
The Marksman's father, chief of the Secret Service, trained John Courage from childhood to become The Marksman--powerful force against crime and evil. He has the eyesight of an eagle and whatever he threw or shot--be it gun, bow & arrow, or merely a ball, he never missed. He was in the last couple of issues of AMAZING MAN COMICS.

Vapo Man was in LIBERTY SCOUTS and MAN OF WAR comics. In private life he was Bradford Cole, who had discovered the chemical secret of expanding and dissolving substances at will. He was able to contract or expand his body into a vapor. It wasn't until MAN OF WAR #2 that he added a costume and mask. Originally his costume consisted only of a pair of trunks.

The Shark was an amazing under sea creature with webbed feet and hands. "Pop" (Father) Neptune was his father. The two werw always exploring and finding trouble where ever they went. The stories were by Leu Glang and The Shark was in AMAZING MAN & STARS & STRIPES.

TNT Todd. The discovery of a new chemical compound enabled Todd to hurl terrific blasts at will. The great force of the substance could also propel him through the air with the speed of a rocket. He had no secret identity. He appeared in the pages of KEEN DETECTIVE FUNNIES when half the comic was in black and white or with a red tint, so the color of his costume is not known.

The Ferret, known as Cal Daltan in Private life, began his career in MAN OF WAR #2. Dalton was the Police Commisioner and certain political groups and racketeers opposed his efforts so secretly he became the Ferret so he could battle the gangsters on their own grounds. He had super strength and the ability to fly. Costume was blue, black trunks, yellow cape, and gray mask.



Pepper, Van, and Whitey, known as The Stars and Stripes, began in STARS & STRIPES #4, Sept. 1941, after they had escaped from a German concentration camp. They vowed to devote every minute of their time to fighting the enemies of America and they signed their pledge in blood. They had no super powers and their unforms were ж actually the brown prison uniforms with some innovations.

The Rainbow, by Alfredo Plastino and Eddy Herron, appeardd in THE ARROW #3, Oct. 1941. Jim Travid got the idea of becoming a costume hero from reading comic books. He told his girl friend Elsie if they could crime in comics in costume-then why couldn't he. It was his his goal to outdo the comic heroes. He spent most his time battling a criminal called Black Rufus. Rainbow's costume was green, red, yellow, and blue.

Speed CENTAUR

© CENTAUR

Speed Centaur must surely go down as one of the most offbeat heroes ever to appear in comics. He was half man and half horse and that's about as offbeat as you can get. He appeared in AMAZING MYSTERY FUNNIES in 1940

DR. SYNTHE

© COMICS CORP of AMERICA (CENTAUR)

Dr. Synthe, Miracle Man of Mo, was a visitor from Mo, a planet far from Earth. He could take any form he wanted and grow to great heightsθ-as much as a mile high. He was seen in STARS & STRIPES COMICS.

1940
MINIMIDGET
© CENTAUR AND
RITTY

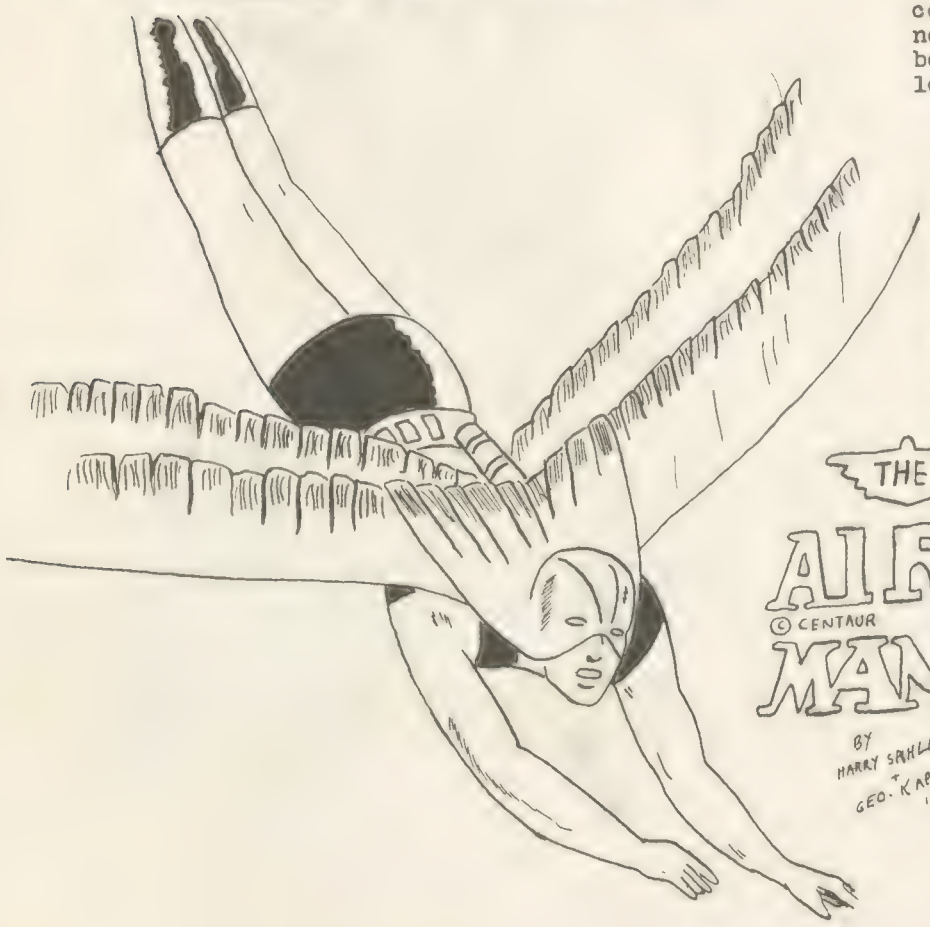
Minimidget was the original "little guy" and he got his start in AMAZING MAN # in 1939. He and his companion, Ritty, were super midgets no bigger than one's hand. They had a very small airplane, as well as a car. They were reduced to their small size by a mad scientist, who was later killed. They aldo appeared in STARS & STRIPES #4.

THE 1940
IRON SKULL
© CENTAUR

Another character from the pages or AMAZING MAN COMICS was The Iron Skulll. His body was rock hard and he had only one vulnerable spot--the main artery in his left forearm. He had no secret identity and it was only in the last couple of stories that he had any type of costume. He was also in STARS & STRIPESM #4.

The Fireman appeared in LIBERTY SCOUTS & MAN OF WAR comics. He had the strange power to extinguish fire by merely touching it; he was also able to fly. In MAN OF WAR he fought a blazing man that was a dead ringer for the Human Torch of the 40's. The Fireman was by Martin Filchock.

THe Crash Kid was the Boy Nemesis to Gangdom. He appeared in the pages of CANNONBALL COMICS, one such issue being #1, Feb. 1945. He was really Rusty Adams, a copy boy for the DAILY HERALD. He had no powers. His costume was green, red belt, orange cape, gray gloves, and hip-length boots.



The Air man, by Sahle & Kapitan, appeared in Centaur's DETECTIVE EYE COMICS. No one ever new his true identity, which seemed to be Centaur's policy. Air Man could fly by means of his wings which he would fill with helium chemicals. A small jet on his back gave him speed and control of direction. His only weapon was small monoxide gas bombs he carried in his belt.

THE BLUE STREAK appeared in CRASH COMICS and was billed as "The Defender of The People" He had no powers but still risked his life to thwart crime. His uniform was purple with a blue mask. Just another little known costume herox of the 40's.

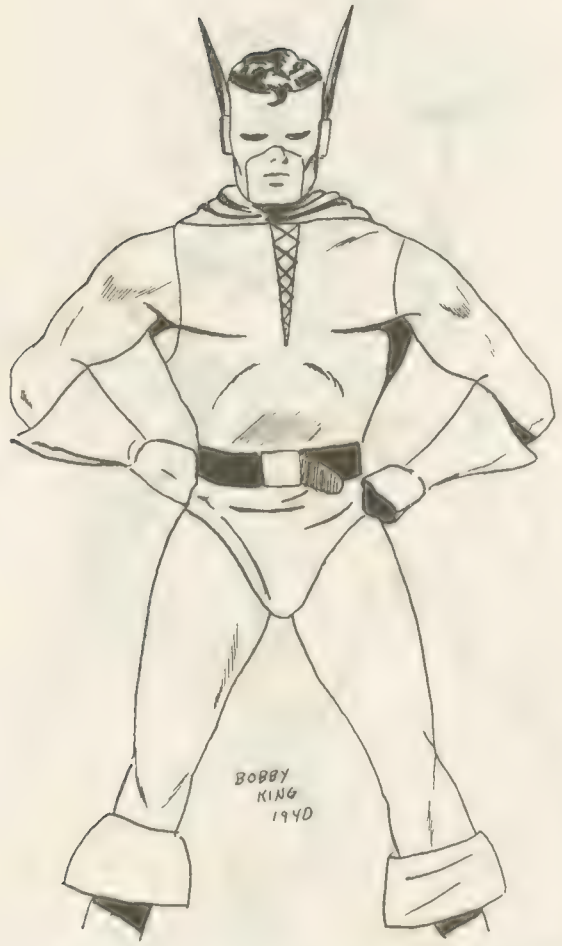
Bruce Dickson was the Thin Man. He had the ability to make his body paper thin yet retain the strength of a prize fighter. He was also ax brilliant scientist. He was in MYSTIC COMICS #4.

Flexo was the original rubber man. He was invented by Joel and Joshua Williams--both scientists. He not hould stretch but had the strength of an ox and could fly, as well. He was in MYSTIC #1-4.

The Quality Comic Group's Magno was in no way related to the SUPER MYSTERY COMICS hero of the same name. This Magno made his appearence in SMASH COMICS #13, Aug. 1940 and was last in #21, april '41. He had no secret identity. His powers came from the magnetic coils about his waist and with these he was able to magnatize himself to any steel object. His costume was red steel mail--or so it looked. The artist was Paul Gustavson.

Marine Terry Gardner, who, after a street fight, was "given" a card by a parrot which read, "At Twilight you will be Master". Then he sees a costume with a "T" on it, buys it, and becomes Twilight. The parrot went by the name of Snoopy. Twilight had an off and on career in CLUE COMICS, being in #1-5,7,9-11, and possibly 13.

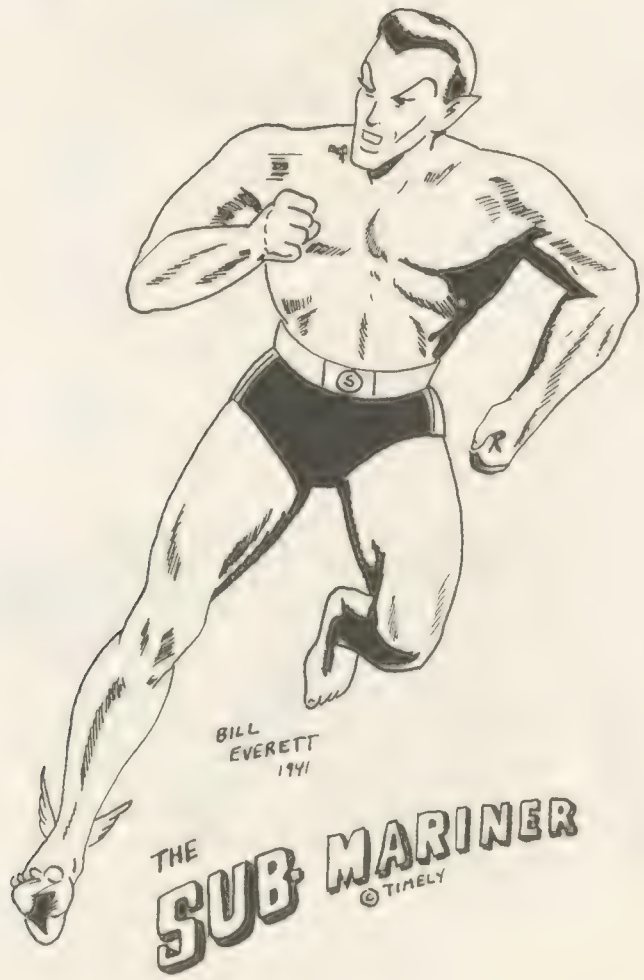
The Firefly appeared in TOP-NOTCH #8 thrum 27 and was not a bad strip at all. He was really Harley Hudson, a brilliant scientist. Many of his stories had a super-natural setting. Most of the art was by King. The Firefly's costume was all black with red gloves, boots, and trunks.

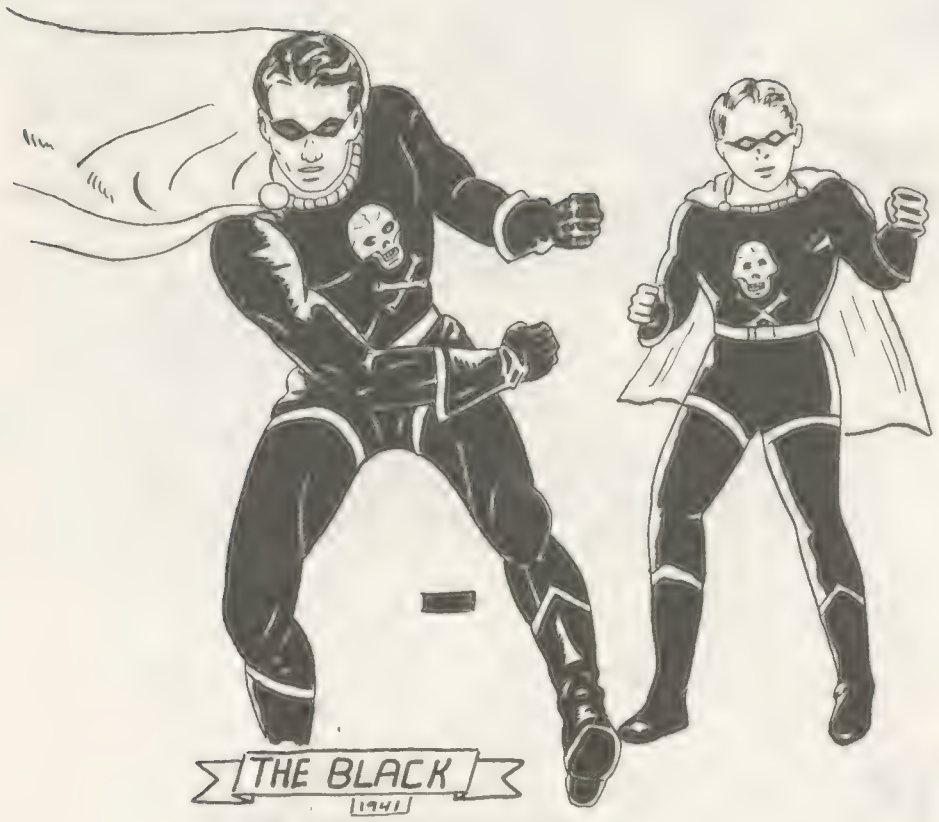


Bob Phantom made his debut in BLUE RIBBON #2, Dec. 1939, which made him MLJ's oldest costume hero. The Wizard also debuted in December of 1939 but not as a real costume hero. After two issues Bob Phantom moved to TOP NOTCH and was in that comic from #3 thru 25. He always made his appear-ence out of a swirl of smoke and vanished the same way. His true identity was that of Walt Whitney, Broadway Columnist. Again, most of the art was handled by King.

Prince Namor (Sub-Mariner) was created by Bill Evertt. Namor began in MARVEL MYSTERY #1 and lasted through #91, not to mention over 30 issues of his own book, plus ~~x~~ numerous appearences in other Timely comics. He was the son of Princess Fen of Atlantis and American Naval Commander McKenzie. The Atlantean army was going to attack the surface people and Princess Fen was sent to seduce McKenzie but she fell in love with him instead. The day the army was massed to attack, McKenzie began blasting away at an ice pack, and as a result of this the Atlantean army was destroyed. Angered at what he had done, the Princess leaped overboard and~~x~~ returned to Atlantis. Much later, Prince Namor was born. When he became a young man his mother told him how the surface people had killed the Atlanteans and he swore he would wipe them out. He tried time and time again but always failed, usually because the Human Torch was there to stop him. When World War II began, Sub-Mariner joined the Allies and his original aim was lost forever. Well, at least until his revival in the 60s.

The Challenger was originally in DARING MYSTERY #7 but moved over to MYSTIC COMICS after only the one story in DARING. He was in MYSTIC #5-10. The Challenger was a master with all weapons. From MYSTIC #6 -10 his mask underwent many changes--from completely covering his his to a Batman type hood. Most stories were drawn by Mike Sekowsky and George Klein. The ~~thi~~ Challenger's costume was all green trimmed in red.



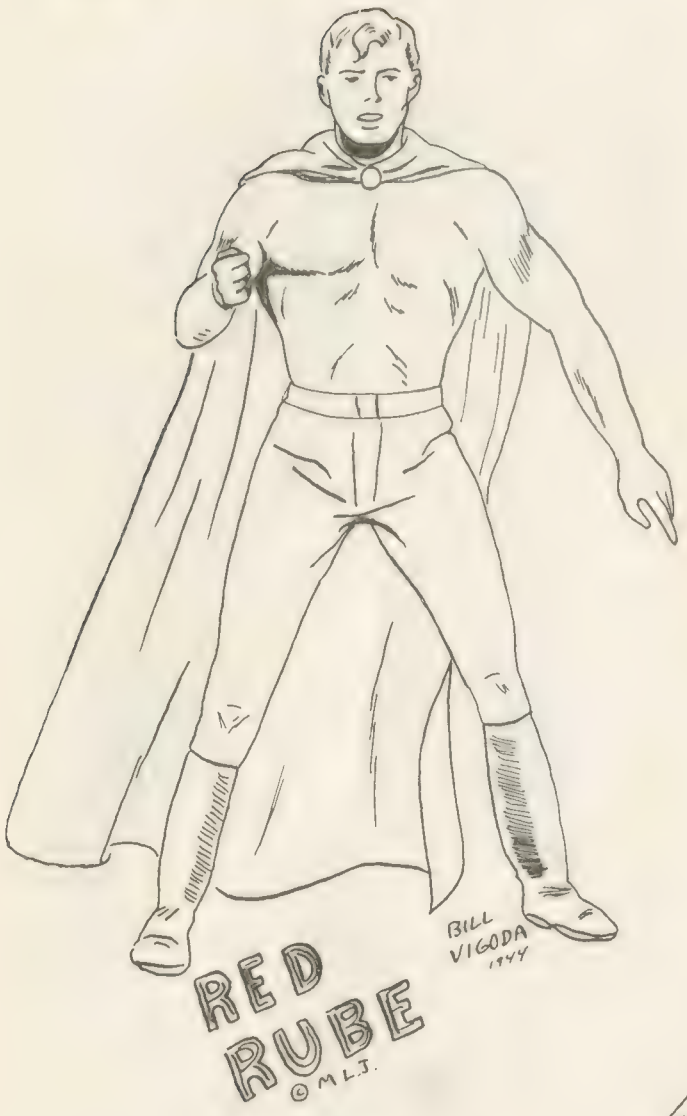


THE TERROR
© BETTER PUBL.

The Black Terror, and his young counterpart, Tim, were better known as the Terror Twins for 9 years--starting their career in EXCITING #9 (May 1941) and lasting until #69, Sept. 1949. Generally considered as Nedor Publications best hero, he also appeared in AMERICA'S BEST and his own comic. In everyday life he was a timid druggist named Bob Benton. He had stubbled on a formular while experimenting with ethers, that revealed a means of titantc powers to him and Tim Roland his young pal.

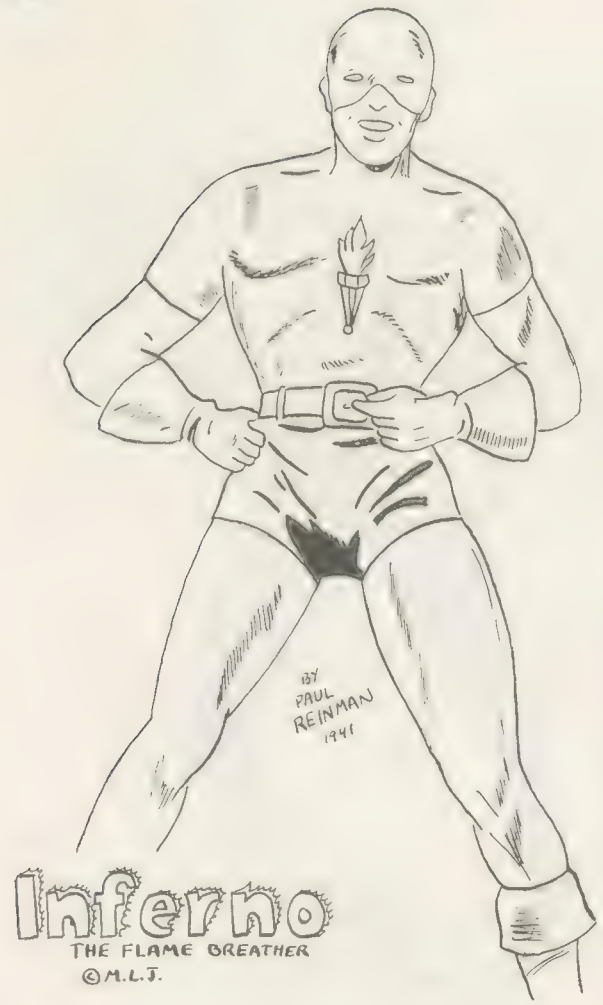
The BLACKBIRD
© FOX PUBL. 1941

This was one of E Fox's last attempts at a second-string costume hero. He was in BLUE BEETLE COMICS 9,10k. The Blackbird was the inventor and pilot of his own new-type plane. He fought the enemies of the U.S. and in real life was Jake Baxter. His friend and mechanic was a fellow named Raferty. This was one of Fox's weaker heroes.



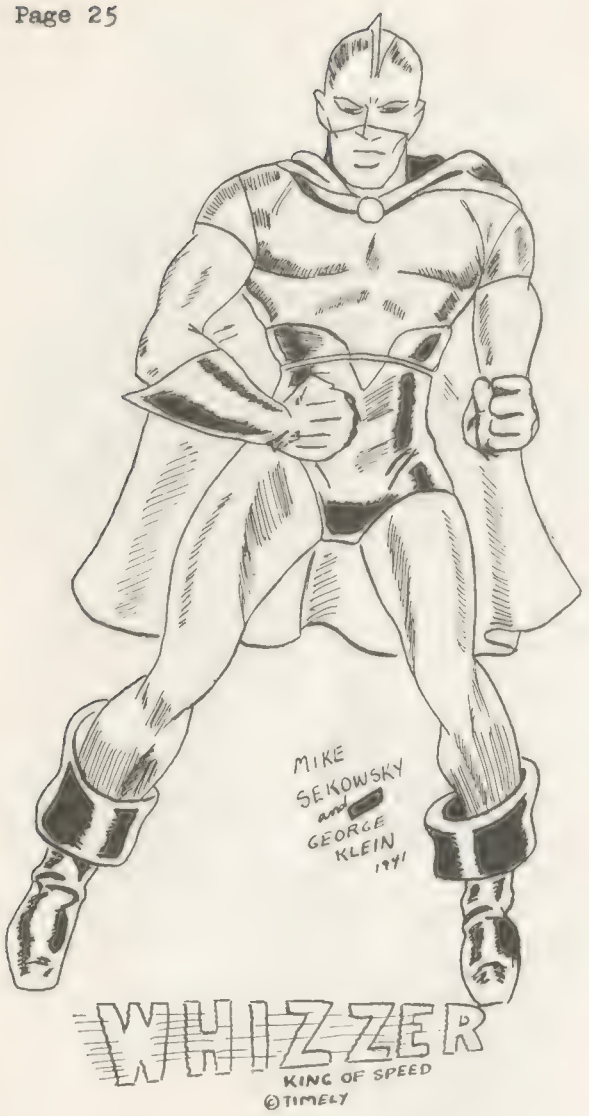
Red Rube was in Zip COMICS #39-47. A sort of copy of Capt. Marvel, we find a young orphan named Rueben whose ancestors were endowed with great powers, and by calling "Red Rube" these powers were his. Rueben was a cub reporter on the DAILY SUN. When in trouble he would yell "Hey Rube" and out of a puff of smoke would appear the Red Rube. He wore a red costume but no short. This was one of MLJ's later attempts at super heroes and not very original, at that.

Doc STrange was Nedor Publication's oldest costume heroes beginning his career in THRILLING #1, Feb. 1940, under the name ofE Doctor Strange. With #12 the Dr. became Doc. His young pal, Mike, joined him between #22 and 29. Doc's powers came from a potent sun-atom potion known as Alosun. Mike never used the potion, therefore, he had no powers. All their adventures were shared with Doc's girl friend Virginia. Many of the stories were by Jack Binder. He was also in AMERICAS BEST #1-23,27.



Inferno was original a helper to Steel Sterling but graduated to his own strip in BLUE RIBBON COMICS. He didn't waar a costume in the Sterling strip bug did in his own stories. His special power was being able to breathe flame. Inferno had no secret identity and most of his stories were by Paul Reinman. The Flame Breather was in BLUE RIBBON 13-19.

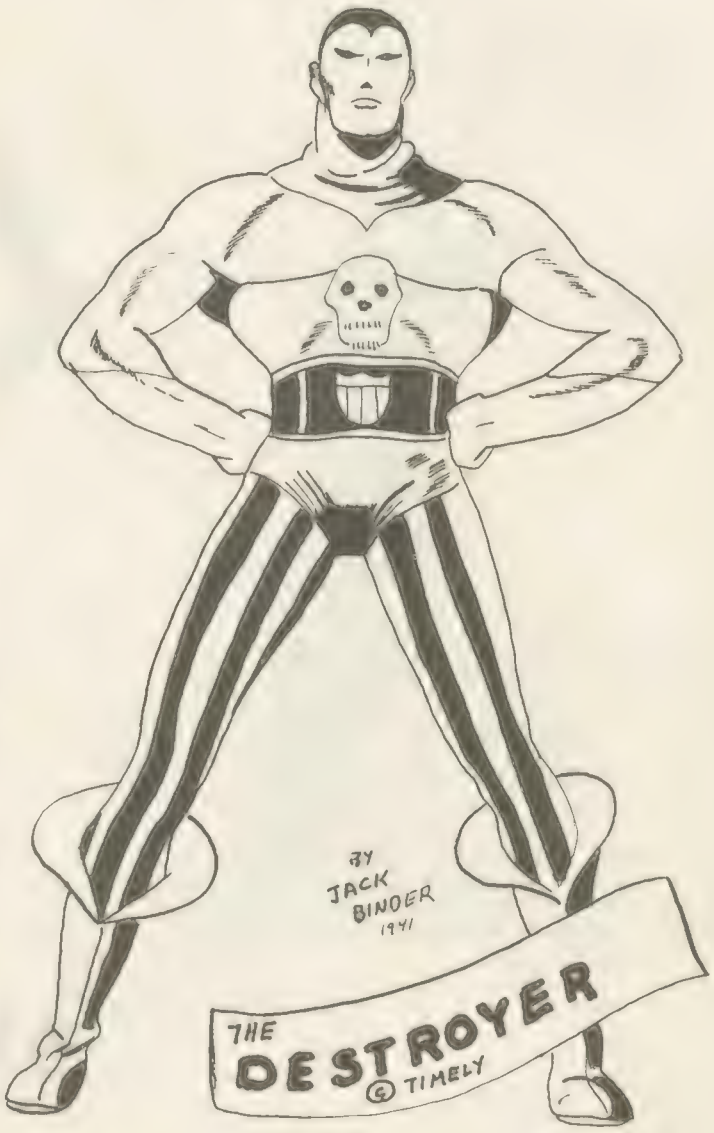
The TWISTER was in BLUE BOLT COMICS from vol. 2 #1 to #7. Only 7 issues for this character who was first done by Paul Gustavson. The Whirlwind Crusader used wind as his weapon He could twist so fast that he would cause a small tornado. He carried a "cyclone gun" which shot out blasts of air. He had no secret identity. Gustavson's art was missing from the strip as early as the 3rd story.



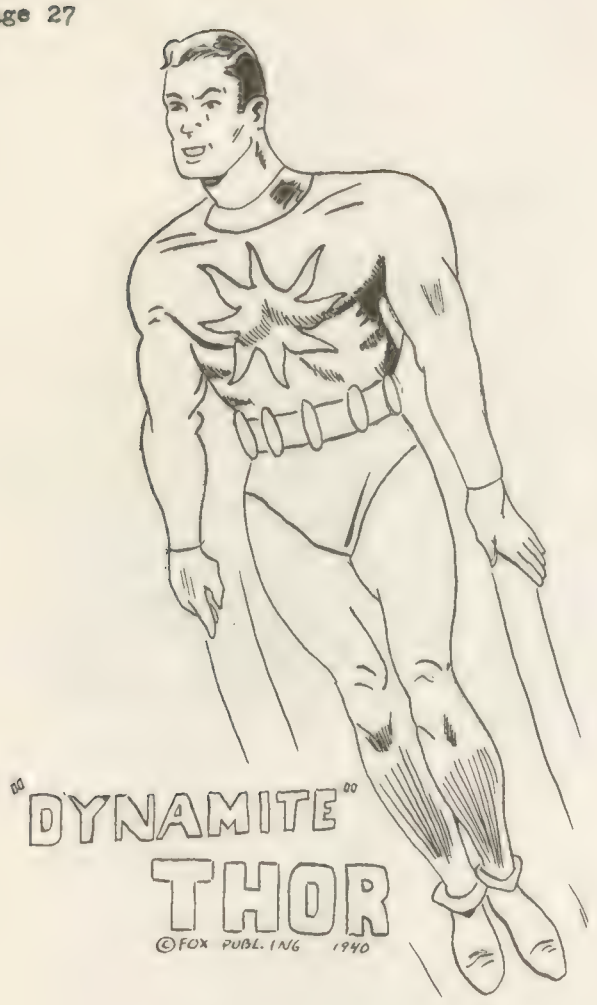
This was Timely's fastest hero and their answer to DC's Flash and Quality's Quicksilver. The Whizzer got his start in #1. In order to save his life his father had to give him a transfusion of mongoose blood--which aside from making him well, also gave him great speed. In early stories his secret identity was Bob Frank but in later stories this identity was lost and we knew him only as the Whizzer. He was one of Timely's more popular heroes appearing in many comics from 1941 to 1946--like AMAZING #1, ALL WINNERS 2-11,,13-19,21, U.S.A. 1, 2,4,6,8-12,14-17, ALL SELECT 1-5,10, and KID KOMICS 10. over the years his costume underwent many minor changes but it was always yellow. At times he wore a cape, and his boots and headgear also changed. Howard James drew most pre-1944 stories, while a few were by Mike Sekowsky and George Klein.

The Black Widow, who was introduced in MYSTIC #4, was Claire Voyant, a young woman who was murdered and became Satan's ambassador. She was able to return to the mortal world as The Black Widow, and her very touch meant instant death to evil doers. This was a good feature but only lasted until issue 7. She was not in #6 but was in ALL SELECT #1. Some of the artists were Sahle & Kapitan in MYSTIC #5 and Stan Drake in #7

NARVEL MYSTERY #13 to about 48 featured the Vision, an inhabitant of another dimension who entered our world through the element of smoke and departed the same way. Whenever there was trouble, out of the smoke of a fire, or even the smoke of a match, would come the Vision; bald head, green face, and all to battle evil. Many stories resembled the Simon & Kirby style but could have been by an artist named David Walters. In early 1942 Al Avison also did a few. The Vision could fly and fought a number of veiled characters, as well as the Germans and Japanese.



The Destroyer made his debut in a story (by Stan Lee and Jack Binder) in MYSTIC #6. Keen Marlow, ace newspaper man stationed in Germany, was an American and no enemy to Germany (this was before the USA got into the war). But he is also part English and because of this Keen is imprisoned. In prison he meets a dieing professor who was working on a formula to make German soldiers super men. But he defied them and was thrown into Keen's cell. He told Marlow what he did and gave his secret liquid to him-Keen drinks it and became more powerful than any human. He vowed to "destroy" the Germans as the Destroyer. MYSTIC #6 contained two of his stories while 7-10 had one each. He appeared on the covers of 6 to 10. Al Avison and Forte also worked on this strip at times. He also was in DARING #11, 12, AMAZING #9, ALL WINNERS #2-12, USA #6,8-14,16,17, ALL SELECT # 6,10, and KID KOMICS #4,6,9,10



Known as "the explosion man", Peter Thor had become an expert at the knowledge of high explosives, to which he himself was immune. He had the ability to propel himself through the air with dynamite. Bynamite Thor was featured in BLUE BOLT COMICS 6-8 and WEIRD COMICS 6. His costume was red, yellow, and blue.

One of Fox's 3 most famous costume heroes--that was The Flame. He started in WONDERWORLD #3, which made him older than the Human Torch by 2 or 3 months. By 1940 he was also appearing in BIG THREE COMICS and his own comic. He could fly and cover himself in flames but he was not as hot of the Torch. The original artist was Lou Fine, then Ed Ashe and last was Arturo Cazeneuve--a work horse on comics from 1941-44. He did work for just about every publisher. The Flames other identity was Gary Preston--a identity he picked up in late 1941, as in the beginning he had no secret identity. Also, in 1941, he was joined by Linda Dale and Pug. In WONDERWORLD #30 Linda became Flame Girl. She had the same powers as he, but wasn't strong enough to control it and was told in the story in WONDERWORLD #33 that she must never use the power again. This may have been the last Flame story.

BLACKJACK made his debut in ZIP COMICS #20 with very fine art by Al. M Camy. Jack Jones became Black Jack to battle crooks after two of his partners were killed by gangsters (they believed HJones was dead also). His trade mark was the Jack of Spades. Camy did most of the strips up to ZIP #27 and then others, like King, and "Red" Holmdale took over and Black Jack never was the same, although he was still tops until about #30. Some of his best known foes were The Black Seven, M Poker Face, and King of Diamonds. Black Jack last appeared in ZIP #35, March 1943.

Next to the Shield and Black Hood, this was MLJ's best costume hero. Like DC's Batman he was a creature of the night. The Hangman started in PEP #17 when he replaced the Comet, his brother, who had just been killed.Bob Dickering was his alter ego and John Dickering had been the Comet. One person knew his secret identity--his girl friend Thelma Gordon. Early stories were drawn by Robbert Storm but by 1941, late, King took over and in 1943 Bob Fuje had become the artist. The Hangman was in PEP 17w to about 45, and HANGMAN COMICS #1-8 and BLACK HOOD 9,10. The first issue of HANGMAN COMICS was actually called SPECIAL COMICS. Two of his most dangerous foes were The Executioner and Capt. Swastika.

Mr. Justice. Next to DC's Spectre, this was perhaps the best known ghosts in comics. "The Royal Wrath" first made his appearence in BLUE RIBBON COMICS #9, Feb. 1941 and was in every issue til the end of that comic--#22. He was also in JACKPOT #1-9. Being a spirit he fought a continual war against vampires, werewolves, demons, and even Satan himself. Mr. Justice was really born in 1040 when the Rogers Clan lured Prince James of England into a trap and killed him. But the spirit of James (Mr. Justice) rose and killed his murderers and then floated in space only to return centuries later. In mortal form or spirit form he was still called Mr. Justice. His costume was sky blue and white. ODDITY: In BLUE RIBBON #22 (the last one) he battled the Ghost of Rogers and really avenged his death.

The Black Crusader. Here was a hero who had a blood clot on his brain and could die at any time--but this didn't stop him from fighting for justice. His costume was all gray and he was in RED DRAGON COMICS #6,8. Spranger and Le Blanc did the strip in #6 only. His other identity was Joe Mills.

THE SHINING KNIGHT

© N.P.P. INC

The Shining Knight was ADVENTURE COMICS longest lived hero, starting in #66ш and lasting until 166--long after the other original ADVENTURE heroes had departed. The Shining Knight was really Sir Justin, who had slept for 14 years, imprisoned in an iceberg with his winged horse, Winged Victory. He was also the only ADVENTURE hero never to appear on a cover. The only person that knew The Shining Knight and Sir Justin were one in the same, was Prof. Moresby. Some of the artists who worked on the strip were Craig Flessel, Frank Frazetta, Joe Kubert, and for most of 1942-43 Arturo Cazeneuve.

This was one of DC's oldest features. It was all Bernard Bailey's and it featured some of his best art in 1941. This strip began in ACTION #1 under the title of "Tex Thompson. From #1-32 Tex and his friens, Bob Daley and Gargantua Potts, adventured around the world. Then in #33 Tex was believed to have drowned but instead Mr. America entered the picture. Gargantua was gone by now and only Daley remained to share Tex's secret. The characteristics of Mr. America were a whip, a feather, and the warning cry of Yankee Doodle. Bob Daley became Fatman in ACTION #42, which also was the first time Mr. America used his cape as a flying carpet. Before that, he had used a bird shaped airplane. With #52 the title read "Mr. America & Fatman" as the Americammandos. Then with #53 Mr. America was changed to Americommando--a name he used until the end, which came in ACTION #74. After #52 Fatman vanished in a few issues.

MR. AMERICA

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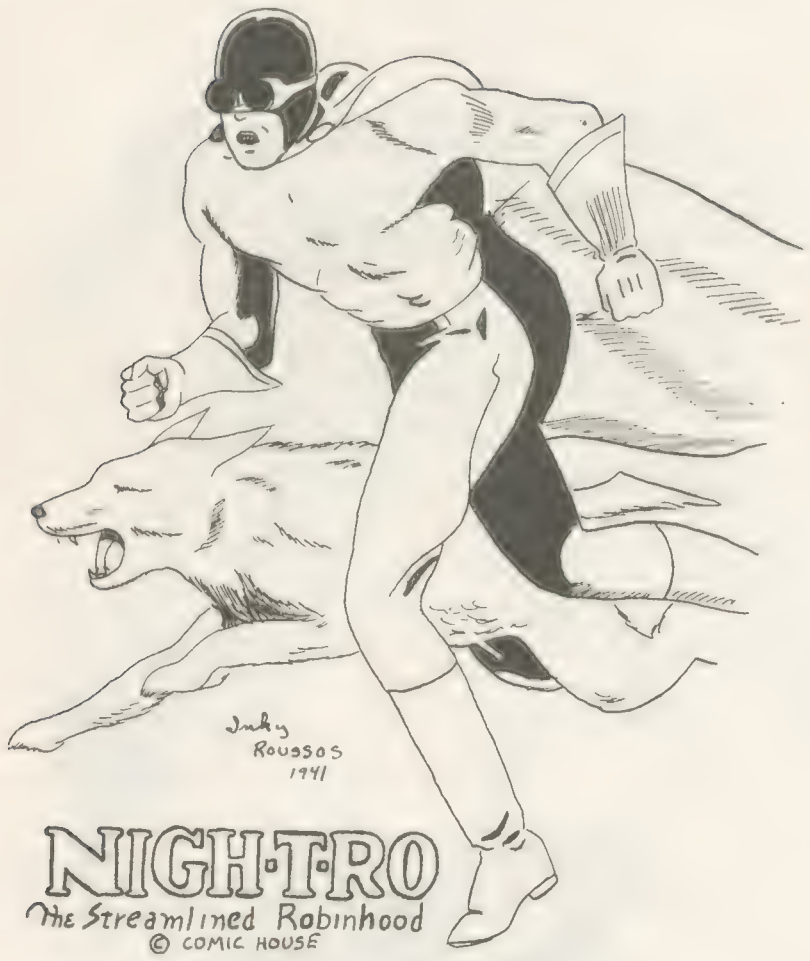
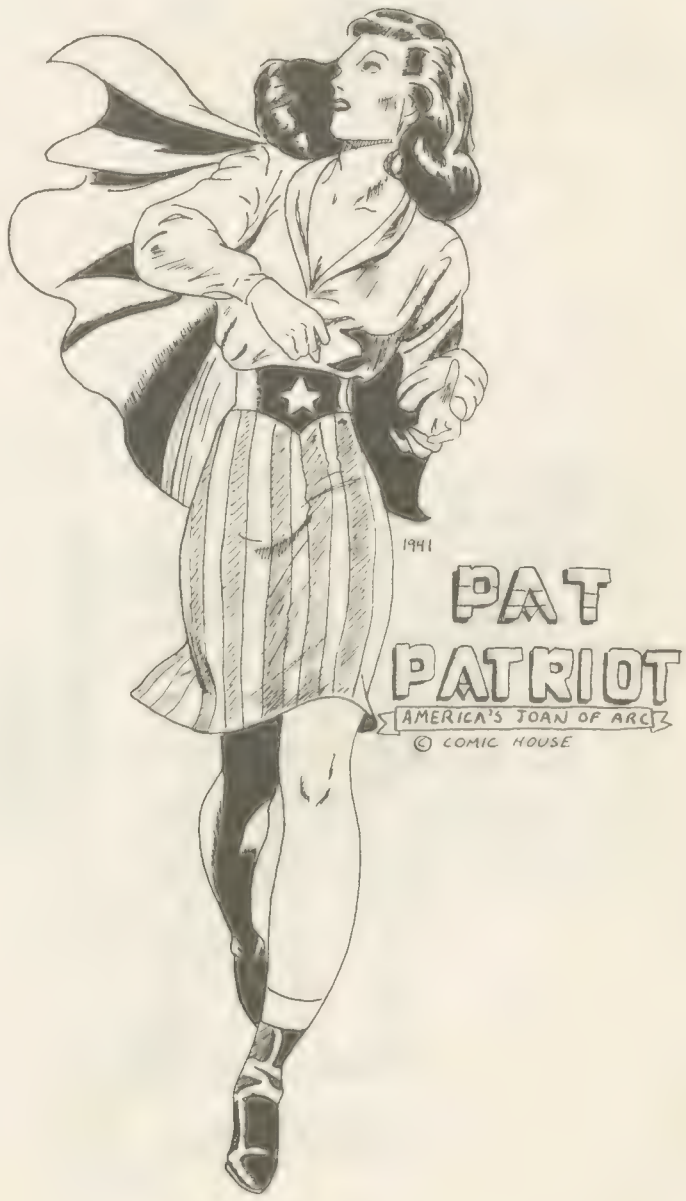


Nigh-t-ro "the streamlined Robin Hood" was drawn by another Batman alumnus, George "Inky" Rousos. Nigh-tro was a copy of DC's Dr. Mid-Nite. He was blind and could only see at night, unless he was waaring his special glasses. While Dr. Mid-Nite had an owl to help him, Nigh-tro had a big dog named Blackie. Nigh-two was in DAREDEVIL 2-8.

The original Silver Streak began in the 3rd or 4th issue of SILVER STREAK COMICS and was later joined by a young boy called Meteor. Both had great speed and could fly, but neither had a secret identity. In most stories the art was by Don Rico. With SILVER STREAK #18, Feb. 1942, Silver Streak had black hair (it was blonde before). Also, in this issue, Robin-type masks were added to both their costumes. SS was last in #19, March 1942. Later SS, minus Meteor, appeared in a different SILVER STREAK comic and DIME COMICS, however, while it was the same character, it was not the same publisher.

London emerged from amid the chaos and debris of war-torn England to inject a new spirit into the hearts of the fighting Britains. He was known simply as "London" for he was London--the living breathing, reality to prove the city of London could take it. Londer had no super powers and in reality was Marc Holmes, a reporter. Oringinally the artistx was Jerry Robinson. All his characters looked as though they came out of the pages of Batman and even London resembled Batman in a different costume. (As many know, Robinson worked on Batman in the early days) London was in DAREDEVIL 2-10 or 11.



Pat Patriot, America'sX Joan of Arc, who was in early issues of DAREDEVIL, was the best drawn of DD comic features--but by 1942 the art had slipped a great deal. The art was more in line with what you'd expect to find in the Quality titles. It even had a Reed Crandall style in early stories. Pat had no powers but could fly a plane with the best of them, and she was no push over when attacked, either. PAt Patriot appeared in DAREDEVIL COMICS #2-10 or 11.

DC's Manhunter made his appearance in ADVENTURE #73. ¤ He was the 2nd character revamped by Simon & Kirby, who had taken over Sandman just one issue before. Manhunter's real identity was Paul Kirk, although in #73 he was called Rick Nelson (that issue only). This was not a continuation of Paul Kirk-Manhunter which Ed Moore did previous to #73. S&K did Manhunter through issue 80, Manhunter had no powers, and also no close friends. His costume was red with blue gloves, boots, and trunks. Manhunter was one of the first DC heroes S&K gave up but the only one that got a good(unknown) artist as a replacement. Manhunter last appeared in ADVENTURE COMICS #92.

Chic Carter was a Vernon Henkel character who appeared in SMASH 1-26 and POLICE 1-18. Actually, Chic only wore his costume in one issue of SMASH, #24, and then in 25 26 he was back to being his own self--a police reporter. But he once again took on the roll of The Sword in the first few issues of POLICE. Another character in this strip was Carter's old sidekick, Detective Sgt. Monahan, who was the typical chubby, derby-hatted, cigar-smoking sergesnt of that era.

STARMAN
©NPP INC

Starman began his career in ADVENTURE #61. With this issue he took over the lead story and the cover; and was featured on all covers up to and including #72. In reality he was Ted Knight, an amateur astronomer. His only power came from his gravity rod which gave him flying ability and magnetic control over matter. During his career he met such foes as The Light and The Mist All stories from #61-80 were drawn by Jack Burnley, but the last pages in #80 had Mort Meskin replacing him. The Starman also appeared in ALL STAR #8-23, replacing Hourman.

THE VIGILANTE
©N.P.P INC.

The Vigilante first hit the trail in ACTION #42. Vig, as he was called, had his origin in #42 and again in 52. He was really the Prairie Troubadour, Greg Sanders, who took over the dual role after his dad was gunned down by killers. Vig took a partner in ACTION #43, by the name of Billy Gunn--an old-timer, but was soon replaced, in #45, by the Chinatown Kid--or as he was better known--Stuff. Stuff never wore a costume though. Both had their hands full with the likes of such characters as The Shade, Rainbow Man, and The Fiddler. Vigilante was also an expert motorcycle rider and he used one instead of a horse. Early stories were by Mort Morton and Cliff--better known as Mort Meskin and Cliff Young. Others over the years were Dan Barry, Howard Sherman, Jerry Robinson, Charlie Paris. Vig and Stuff were last in ACTION #198. Vigilante also appeared in LEADING 1-14 as on of The Seven Soldiers of Victory.

The Witness was one of Timely's short-lived heroes, only in MYSTIC #7-9 and in costume in just 7 and 8. Hex had no origin and was billed as judge, jury, and avenger of evil. He was a man of the night, like Batman and had no powers. His costume was blue with red cape and hood. He had no secret identity. S.T. Anley was given credit for the story in #8, might also have done the one in #7. In #9, he looked a lot like the Spirit.

The Black Marvel was in ALL WINNERS #1 and MYSTIC #5-9. The art on the stories in #5,7,8 was beatiful while those in 6 and 9 were poor. Al Gabriele was the artist in #7, and George Klein & Howard James in #8. The Black Marvel was really Dan Lyons, young adventurer. The Chieftan of the Black Feet Indians had died and the tribe needed someone to take his place. They wanted the smartest, strongest, fastest, and bravest man they could find, however, no braves were able to pass all the tests. Then one day Dan was given a chance and he passed them all. And a white man was made their chief and was given the black cloak of the Chieftain. He then set out to battle evil and injustice and never again were indians mentioned in this strip after this.

MAGNO

© ACE MAGAZINES INC.

THE MAGNETIC MAN

Magno, Ace's greatest hero, started in SUPER MYSTERY #1, June 1940, and ran for about 30 issues. From what I have discovered about this hero he never had a origin. Magno, the Magnetic Man, was the master of magetism. His young pal, Davy, began his career in issue 4. Both were able to magnetize themselves to any metal object, even if it was miles away. Magno's most powerful foe was The Clown, who appeared off and on throughout Magno's entire career. They also battled a snake-like saboteur known as The Cobra. The best art on this strip was done by Jim Mooney, who also did several covers. Other artist to handle this hero were H.G. Laugher, Harvey Kurtzman, Ferstadt, and Rudy Palais.

1941

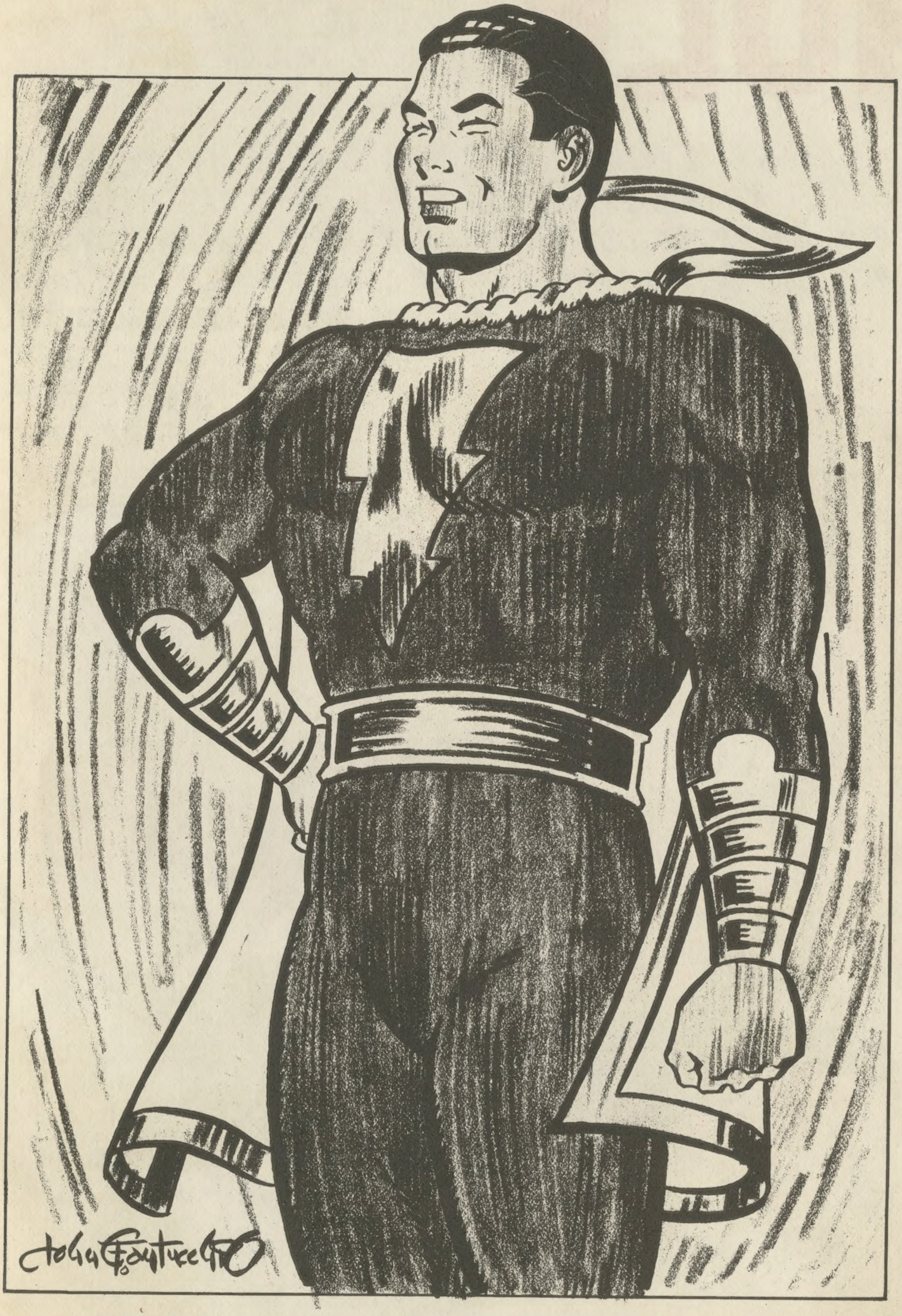
U.S. JONES

© FOX PUBL. INC.

This was one of Fox's last big costume heroes and one they really pushed during late 1941. U.S. Jones began somewhere between WONDERWORLD COMICS 25 and 28 with a costume quite different than the illo shown here. Originally his costume was styled after that of Superman--blue with red trunks and boots. When Fox decided to push U.S. Jones in late '41 (along with The Eagle & V-Man) they gave him more patriotic garb and his own book, which ran 2 issues. His last appearence in WONDERWORLD was in #33. By this time he had even replaced The Flame as cover and lead feature. He had no secret identity and was Jones whether he was in or out of costume. His close friend was Grumbler. One of the artists that worked on this strip was Arturo Cazenauve.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

The late, the great -- Captain Marvel



THE INCREDIBLE HULK

"IS HE MAN OR MONSTER...OR BOTH?" READ THE COVER OF HULK NO. 1, MAY, 1962. LIKELY AS NOT MANY READERS OF THE MIGHTY HULK STILL WONDER, BUT...

...THE FIRST HULK THAT FIRST APPEARED IN THE NOV., 1960 ISSUE OF JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY IN "HERE COMES...THE HULK!" WAS DEFINITELY A MONSTER OUT TO CONQUER THE WORLD! WE WONDER HOW THE JOLLY GREEN GIANT OF COMICS WOULD FARE AGAINST THE HAIRY HORROR OF MARVEL'S EARLIER DAYS! IN FACT, IT MIGHT BE FUN TO SEE MARVEL'S MIGHTIEST MONSTERS PITTED AGAINST MARVEL'S MIGHTIEST HEROES!